

Message Text

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APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

M:BHREAD

PEACE CORPS:CPAYTON, DIR.(IN DRAFT)

M/MO:JMCLARK

S/P:PHKREISBERG

A:JMTHOMAS (IN DRAFT)

ARA:RGARELLANO (IN DRAFT)

NEA:NADUBS (IN DRAFT)

AF:WCHARROP (IN DRAFT)

EA:RBOAKLEY (INDRAFT)

S/IG:RMSAYRE

M/DGP:HGBARNES

DESIRED DISTRIBUTION

TO ALL REGIONAL BUREAUS AND TO THE PEACE CORPS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

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INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: PEACE CORPS-STATE DEPARTMENT RELATIONS

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FOR AMBASSADORS AND PEACE CORPS DIRECTORS FROM SECRETARY
OF STATE AND DIRECTOR ACTION/PEACE CORPS

1. THIS MESSAGE RESTATES AND REAFFIRMS THE BASIC
PRINCIPLES OF THE PEACE CORPS ACT WHICH GUIDES PEACE CORPS
RELATIONS WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE PEACE CORPS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY. THESE

PRINCIPLES HAVE NOT CHANGED SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEACE CORPS IN 1961, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL ADDRESSEES RECALL THEM, EMPHASIZE THEIR IMPORTANCE, AND ENSURE THAT U. S. MISSION AND PEACE CORPS STAFF ABROAD OBSERVE THEIR SPIRIT.

2. THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF THE PEACE CORPS IS TO BUILD LINKS BETWEEN THE U. S. AND THE PEOPLES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AT THE GRASS ROOTS LEVEL, TO PROVIDE PRACTICAL AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS, AND TO DEMONSTRATE THROUGH THE PERSONAL COMMITMENT OF THE VOLUNTEERS THE INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THE WELFARE OF INDIVIDUALS IN DEVELOPING

COUNTRIES DISTINCT AND SEPARATE FROM THE OFFICIAL RELATIONS AND POLICIES OF GOVERNMENTS. THE PEACE CORPS AND THE THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS IT HAS SENT ABROAD OVER THE LAST SEVENTEEN YEARS HAVE BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY SUCCESSFUL IN THIS ROLE. THE PRESIDENT AND WE STRONGLY SUPPORT THESE OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES OF THE PEACE CORPS AND WISH TO STRENGTHEN ITS CAPABILITIES FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

3. SUCH A ROLE FOR THE PEACE CORPS REPRESENTS AN INTRINSIC AND IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE BROAD FOREIGN POLICY GOALS OF THE U. S. EVEN THOUGH TO BE EFFECTIVE
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IT MUST REMAIN SUBSTANTIALLY SEPARATE FROM THE FORMAL DAY-TO-DAY CONDUCT AND CONCERNS OF FOREIGN POLICY BECAUSE OF ITS UNIQUE PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CHARACTER.

AS FORMER SECRETARY RUSK WROTE TO CHIEFS OF U. S. MISSION: "TO MAKE THE PEACE CORPS AN INSTRUMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY WOULD BE TO ROB IT OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO FOREIGN POLICY...THE PEACE CORPS IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD TO LEARN WHAT AMERICA IS ALL ABOUT."

BY DEVELOPING FRIENDSHIP, COOPERATION, ASSISTANCE, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS AND THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS OF THEIR HOST COUNTRIES, THE PEACE CORPS CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO THAT BUILDING OF INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND SYMPATHY BETWEEN PEOPLES WHICH IS AN INTEGRAL LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY.

4. PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT U.S. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THEY SHOULD NOT BE TREATED AS OFFICIALS, NOR ASKED TO PERFORM OFFICIAL DUTIES OTHER THAN PEACE

CORPS FUNCTIONS. TO THE MAXIMUM FEASIBLE EXTENT CONSISTENT WITH BASIC USG COUNTRY POLICY OBJECTIVES OF EACH MISSION, THE PEACE CORPS WILL OPERATE AUTONOMOUSLY. PEACE CORPS COUNTRY DIRECTOR STAFF ARE U. S. OFFICIALS AND ARE PART OF THE U. S. MISSION IN THE COUNTRY IN WHICH THEY ARE BASED. THE PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR SHOULD BE GIVEN DISCRETION AS TO WHETHER HE OR SHE PARTICIPATES IN COUNTRY TEAM MEETINGS, HOWEVER, WHEN MATTERS OF DIRECT RELEVANCE TO PEACE CORPS AFFAIRS ARE NOT UNDER DISCUSSION.

5. AS IN THE PAST, SEPARATION BETWEEN THE PEACE CORPS AND INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES MUST BE COMPLETE AND ABSOLUTE. PEACE CORPS STAFF SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN MEETINGS WHERE DEFENSE OR INTELLIGENCE ISSUES ARE DISCUSSED,
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UNLESS VOLUNTEER SAFETY IS AT ISSUE.

6. THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS RESPONSIBLE BY LAW FOR PROVIDING "CONTINUOUS SUPERVISION AND GENERAL DIRECTION" OF THE PEACE CORPS. THIS AUTHORITY IS INTERPRETED BROADLY TO LEAVE THE PEACE CORPS WITH AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AS POSSIBLE IN ITS OPERATIONS SO LONG AS THESE DO NOT CONFLICT WITH U.S. OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHIEF OF MISSION AND THE PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR TO ENSURE THAT THIS POLICY AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK IS MAINTAINED IN THE FIELD UNDER THE BROAD AUTHORITY PROVIDED THE CHIEF OF MISSION BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS LETTER OF OCTOBER 25, 1977 (STATE 256085). SHOULD POLICY DIFFERENCES ARISE THEY SHOULD BE HANDLED AS SPECIFIED IN THAT LETTER.

7. THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR "NEGOTIATION, CONCLUSION AND TERMINATION" OF PEACE CORPS COUNTRY AGREEMENTS.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S ADVICE AND APPROVAL WILL BE OBTAINED PRIOR TO PROPOSING NEW PROGRAMS OR PROGRAMS IN NEW COUNTRIES. THEREAFTER THE PEACE CORPS WILL ORDINARILY MAKE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS THEMSELVES AND ARRANGE FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF AGREEMENTS, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE U. S. CHIEF OF MISSION IN THE COUNTRY CONCERNED BE KEPT FULLY INFORMED AND BE APPROPRIATELY CONSULTED BY THE PEACE CORPS REPRESENTATIVE REGARDING THE STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS, THE PROGRAMS BEING PLANNED, AND THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED.

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8. THE U.S. MISSION IN THE HOST COUNTRY WILL PROVIDE
THE PEACE CORPS WITH NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
ASSISTANCE.

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